

Omaha World-Herald SPORTS

SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 2023
SECTION C



CHRIS MACHIAN, THE WORLD-HERALD

PREP FOOTBALL IS IN THE AIR

Believe it or not, fall is also in the air. And that's because football has returned (though temperatures certainly haven't cooled down). It was Week 1 of the high school season, and plenty of

teams were in for a battle Friday. That included Bellevue West and Kenny Bryant, left, against Omaha North and Titan Glassman on Friday night. The fifth-ranked Vikings pulled off the

season's first big upset, too, topping the second-ranked Thunderbirds 25-7.

More high school football coverage, Pages C4-C5

NO. 5 NU DEF. UTAH STATE 25-20, 25-17, 25-17

NU freshmen fire on all cylinders in debut

BRENT C. WAGNER
Lincoln Journal Star

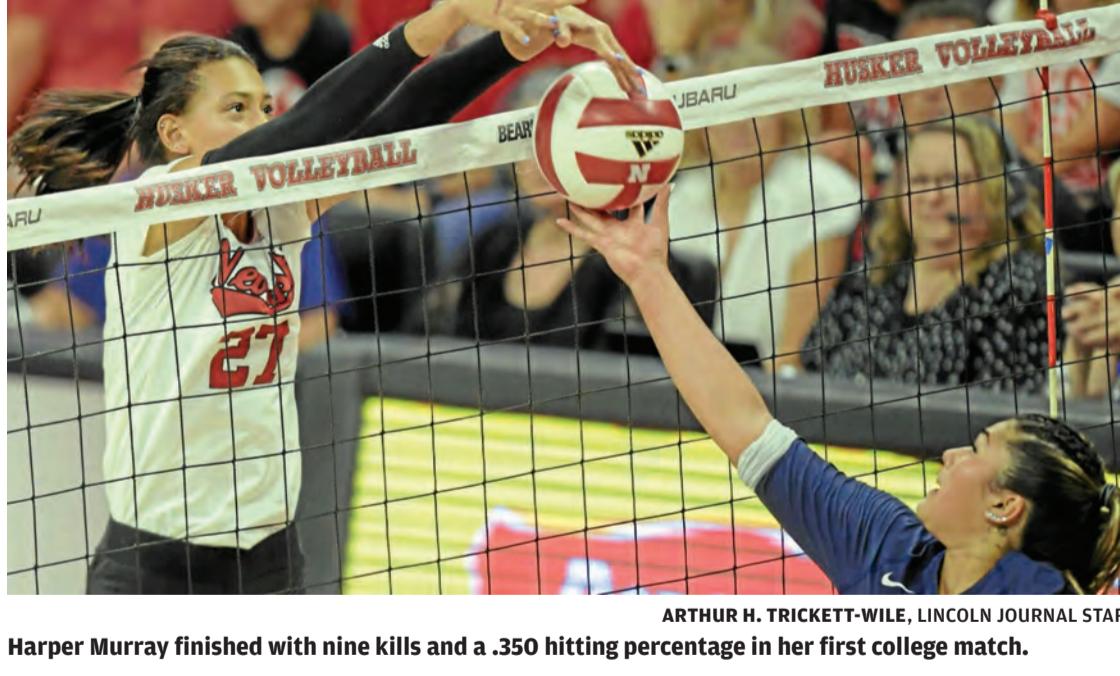
LINCOLN — Nebraska played three freshmen in its first match of the season.

The showing by those players — setter Bergen Reilly, outside hitter Harper Murray and defensive specialist Laney Choboy — along with coach John Cook's comments after the match indicate they'll keep getting a chance to show what they can do.

In the first match of her college career, Murray had a strong all-around game and made timely plays in helping the Huskers sweep Utah State on Friday 25-20, 25-17, 25-17.

Nebraska won the final five points of the match.

Murray finished with nine kills and led Nebraska's pin hitters with a .350 hitting percentage. She added five blocks and one



ARTHUR H. TRICKETT-WILE, LINCOLN JOURNAL STAR

Please see NU VOLLEYBALL, Page C2

Harper Murray finished with nine kills and a .350 hitting percentage in her first college match.

NO. 18 CU DEF. LOYOLA CHICAGO 25-23, 28-26, 25-22

Middles help Bluejays earn win in opener over Ramblers

WORLD-HERALD NEWS SERVICE

WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. — The second set practically begged for an ending. The endless tradeoffs, the errors that extended it. And by way of a ball that ricocheted from Norah Sis' outstretched arms, Kiana Schmitt skied toward the apex of the ball to give it a proper close, picking up another kill to set Creighton up for set point.

Right place, right time.

When it wasn't Schmitt killing Loyola Chicago's buzz Friday, it was sophomore Ann Marie Remmes. The two replaced each other on the floor, but they operated like a pair of synchronized, efficient robots twitching to the same tune in CU's 25-23, 28-26, 25-22 win.

The No. 18 Bluejays entered the weekend with uncertainty regarding rotations. Depth, minutes and how coach Kirsten Bernthal Booth would play her hand were in the air — and for all we know, still are.

Please see CU VOLLEYBALL, Page C2

FOOTBALL

New era here, Rhule feels Huskers are ready to play

SAM MCKEON

World-Herald Sports Editor

LINCOLN — If the Matt Rhule era works out the way he hopes — the way Nebraska football needs it to work — this first offseason and training camp may be worth a book. Pushing weight sleds in the snow last winter. Rooming in the dorms this summer. Practicing in 100 degree heat just after the start of classes.

"It was the toughest fall camp

Please see NU FOOTBALL, Page C3

NEBRASKA AT MINNESOTA

7 p.m. Thursday

Minneapolis

Fox; 590 AM

NEBRASKA FOOTBALL

New safeties sit atop initial depth chart for Husker opener

EVAN BLAND

World-Herald Staff Writer

LINCOLN — A month of full camp has culminated in Nebraska's first depth chart under coach Matt Rhule.

The game-week pecking order — released minutes before Rhule spoke with media members Friday morning — mostly confirmed what coaches and players had said throughout August. Among the notable developments is Tristan Alvano and Timmy Bleekrode

Please see DEPTH CHART, Page C3

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BRIEFLY

BASEBALL

Chasers lose again

Hernan Perez hit a pair of home runs to lift St. Paul to a 9-3 win over the Storm Chasers on Friday night.

Omaha led 3-0 after three innings as Tyler Gentry drove in runs with a sacrifice fly in the first inning and a single in the third.

But Perez hit a two-run homer in the fifth and then put the Saints in front with a three-run shot in the sixth.

Omaha and St. Paul continue their series at 6:35 p.m. Saturday.

St. Paul (72-51) 000 243 000-9 12 1
At Omaha (53-66) 201 000 000-3 7 2
W: Woods Richardson, 5-6; L: Barlow, 0-1; 2B: SP, Martin, Keirsey, Celestino.

BASKETBALL

Tominaga scores five

Nebraska men's basketball guard Keisei Tominaga scored five points in Japan's 81-63 loss to Germany at the FIBA World Cup in Okinawa, Japan.

Tominaga came off the bench, logged 12 minutes, hit a 3-pointer and made two free throws.

Roughly half of his minutes came after the game was well decided, as Germany — led by NBA veterans Dennis Schroeder, Mo Wagner and Franz Wagner — took a 53-31 halftime lead and cruised home.

Japan next plays Finland on Sunday morning.

Bronny has heart defect

LOS ANGELES — Bronny James went into cardiac arrest during a basketball workout at the University of Southern California last month because of a congenital heart defect, according to a family spokeswoman.

The 18-year-old son of Los Angeles Lakers superstar LeBron James was stricken on July 24. He was hospitalized at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center and later was seen by doctors at the Mayo Clinic and Atlantic Health-Morristown Medical Center in New Jersey.

A statement issued Friday by Stephanie Rosa of the LeBron James Family Foundation said the probable cause of James' sudden cardiac arrest has been identified.

"It is an anatomically and functionally significant Congenital Heart Defect which can and will be treated," the statement said. "We are very confident in Bronny's full recovery and return to basketball in the very near future."

The younger James was released from Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles three days after the incident at USC's Galen Center. The following night he dined out in Santa Monica with his family.

Bronny, whose full name is LeBron James Jr., committed to USC in May after the 6-foot-3 guard became one of the nation's top prospects out of Sierra Canyon School in nearby Chatsworth.

FOOTBALL

49ers trade Lance

SANTA CLARA, Calif. — The San Francisco 49ers have traded quarterback Trey Lance to the Dallas Cowboys less than three years after trading three first-round picks to draft him.

A person familiar with the situation said the Cowboys will send a fourth-round pick to San Francisco for a player drafted third overall in 2021. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the deal hasn't been announced.

Lance had lost the competition to San Darnold to be the backup to Brock Purdy in San Francisco earlier in the week, setting the stage for his departure.

San Francisco traded three first-round picks and a third-rounder to Miami in 2021 to move up from No. 12 and draft the untested Lance third overall.

Lance started only 17 games at FCS-level North Dakota State before the Niners drafted him, and he never got much of a chance to gain the experience he needed in the NFL.

He spent his rookie season backing up Jimmy Garoppolo, starting just two games as an injury replacement and being hampered by a finger injury on his throwing hand.

Lance was handed the starting job last season, but that lasted less than five quarters as he broke his ankle early in Week 2 and was sidelined for the rest of the season.

Purdy, taken with the last draft pick in 2022, came on late in the season and won his first seven starts to take over the starting role headed into this season.

GOLF

Record-breaking start gives Morikawa share of lead

ATLANTA (AP) — One bad shot during practice led to Collin Morikawa spending two hours looking for a fix. And now he has a scoring record at East Lake that previously belonged to Tiger Woods.

Morikawa followed his 61 with another clean card for a 6-under 64 on Friday in the Tour Championship, giving him the lowest 36-hole score at East Lake and a share of the lead with Viktor Hovland going into the weekend of the FedEx Cup finale.

"Sometimes just being out there when you don't realize that you're out there for that long of a period, but you find one thing that you hope works," said Morikawa, winless since the DP World Tour Championship in Dubai at the end of 2021.

"I've done that for the past few years, hoping that we're going to find that one thing that clicks and right now, I'm going to stick with it."

Scores can look inflated at the Tour Championship because players start at various points under par depending on the FedEx Cup position. Looks were not the least bit deceiving with Morikawa, who shot 125 without a bogey over two days in extreme heat.

He was No. 24 in the FedEx Cup and started at 1-under par. Hovland, who has been hotter than Atlanta dating to the final round in the BMW Championship last week, was the No. 2 seed and began the tournament at 8 under.

They now are 16-under par,

two shots clear of top seed Scottie Scheffler. The world's No. 1 player was running hot under the collar after opening with a 71 that included the worst kind of triple bogey — a tee shot in the water and a three-putt from 15 feet.

Friday was another ball-striking clinic — he missed only two greens — and Scheffler made enough birdie chances for a 65.

Woods shot 127 for the opening 36 holes in the 2007 Tour Championship, back when everyone started at even.

That was the year grass was hard to find on the putting surfaces and the pins were in the middle of most greens.

This year it's all about the wind, or lack of it. The heat has been

stifling, but only an occasional breeze has allowed for extreme scoring. Five players shot 65 or lower.

"There's going to be a lot more low scores, a lot more birdies made. I'm going to have to continue that heading into the next two days," Morikawa said.

Gutschewski tied for 22nd

BOISE, Idaho — Omaha Scott Gutschewski shot a bogey-free 66 Friday and is tied for 22nd place midway through the Korn Ferry Tour's Boise Open.

Gutschewski made five birdies on the day as he improved to 9-under for the tournament. Ben Kohles and Chan Kim are tied for the lead at 14-under.

VOLLEYBALL: TEXAS A&M DEF. UNO 25-18, 25-27, 25-12, 25-21

Mavs can't keep up with Aggies' offense in opener

WORLD-HERALD NEWS SERVICE

UNO couldn't slow a hot-hitting Texas A&M squad as the Mavs dropped their season-opener 25-18, 25-27, 25-12, 25-21 Friday night at Baxter Arena.

The Aggies hit .364 as a team while holding the Mavs to .115. Caroline Meuth led A&M with 17 kills and hit .406. Shayla McCormick led UNO with 13 kills, while Kali Jurgensmeier had 12 kills and a team-high eight digs.

The opening set was tied 9-9

before the Aggies used an 8-3 run to take control. A&M hit .440 in the first set.

The Aggies were on their way to a two-set lead as they broke a 14-14 tie in the second set with a 5-1 run and eventually stretched the lead to 23-17 before the Mavs rallied.

Erica Fava served back-to-back aces to make it 23-21, then at 24-22 UNO held off two set points on back-to-back kills by Shayla McCormick and Kali Jurgensmeier.

A&M also had a set point at 25-24, but Jurgensmeier had back-to-back kills and the Mavs won the set on an Anika Ivester kill.

A&M controlled the third set, outhitting the Mavs .478-(minus).103. UNO had seven kills and 10 hitting errors in the set.

There were nine ties in the fourth set, the last one being at 15-15. UNO was within 22-21, but the Aggies scored the final three points.

UNO will play Kansas at 7 p.m.

Saturday, Kansas swept Pepperdine in Friday's other match at Baxter.

Texas A&M (1-0) 25 25 25 25 25
At UNO (0-1) 18 27 12 21
TAMU (kills-aces-blocks): Meuth 17-0-1, Lednicki 12-0-2, Muoneke 11-0-2, Lopuyo 8-0-6, Cos-Opkalla 4-0-4, Perkins 3-0-4, Manning 0-3-0. Totals: 55-3-22.
UNO: McCormick 13-0-2, Jurgensmeier 12-0-1, Ruch 8-2-5, Hardt 3-0-2, Ivester 2-0-2, Fava 0-3-0, Fairbanks 0-1-0. Totals: 42-6-14.

Digs: TAMU 41 (Hogan 10, Meuth 6, Lopuzeta 5, Muoneke 5, Underwood 4, Cos-Opkalla 3, Pearson 2, Perkins 1, Lednicki 1, Lopuyo 1), UNO 30 (Jurgensmeier 8, Fava 7, Fairbanks 6, McCormick 5, Curry 4). Set assists: TAMU 54 (Manning 23, Buzleupe 22, Hogan 5, Cos-Opkalla 1, Muoneke 1, Pearson 1), UNO 39 (Curry 35, Fairbanks 3, McCormick 1).

CU volleyball

From C1

But, just for an afternoon, Creighton's pair of middle blockers left one position without tension.

Between Remmes, who received her first career start, and Schmitt, the fifth-year senior the Jays happily welcomed back, CU had more than enough firepower to fight off the feisty Ramblers. Even when the teams traded run after run. Even after Loyola was first to 20 points in each set.

When Creighton was forced to rally to yank Loyola's late leads, Remmes would find some way to score — a slick touch for a kill, a timely block. When the Ramblers got out to a 6-0 start in the first set, it was during Schmitt's



CREIGHTON ATHLETICS

Creighton's Ava Martin had a match-high 14 kills.

minutes that Creighton returned to form.

The two combined for 17 kills on 31 swings while hitting .484.

Sophomore Ava Martin added a match-high 14 kills on 34 swings and four digs. Junior Kendra Wait finished with six kills, 28 assists

and nine digs.

Remmes and Schmitt's late-game heroics propelled Creighton on a relatively sluggish day that wasn't exactly uber-efficient.

Booth has an entire weekend to figure out what works, but a day into the season, Remmes and Schmitt might've figured out a fraction of it for her.

Creighton will face No. 16 Purdue at 2:30 p.m. Saturday.

Loyola Chicago (0-1) 23 26 22
Creighton (1-0) 25 28 25
LC (kills-aces-blocks): McNabb 10-0-0, Feldkamp 9-0-1, Venuto 6-0-2, Barnes 6-0-1, Banitt 5-1, Borum 4-3-1, Ajanovic 0-1-0, Hinckman 0-1-0. Totals: 46-6-6.

Digs: LC 54 (Hinchman 13, McNabb 11, Borum 10, Banitt 8, Barnes 6, Ajanovic 3, Venuto 2, Feldkamp 1), CU 48 (Sis 16, Wait 9, Bolton 8, Breisinger 7, Martin 4, Remmes 1, McCune 1, Bichelmeier 1, Ziegler 1). Set assists: LC 37 (Borum 27, Hinckman 4, McNabb 2, Barnes 2, Banitt 2), CU 38 (Wait 28, Sis 4, Bolton 4, Remmes 1, Breisinger 1).

NU volleyball

From C1

ace.

The Huskers' other starters were outside hitter Lindsay Krause, right-side hitter Merritt Beason, middle blockers Bekka Allick and Maggie Mendelson and libero Lexi Rodriguez.

Reilly had 26 assists with four kills on six attempts. She also had seven digs and three blocks.

Cook said Reilly earned the right to start at setter, where the Huskers also have junior Kennedi Orr.

"Day after day she's usually one of our best servers, she's getting better as a blocker, she sets really good tempo, she sets the middle really well," Cook said. "Her back sets are world class. If you really know volleyball, some of her back sets are elite-level. And she's a great competitor."

"It's been very close, but over time she's a couple points better right now."

Reilly knew a few hours before the match that she'd start.

"(Cook) just kind of said this team has a lot of trust in you and you've given us a reason to trust you and we have full confidence in you," Reilly said. "That was his reasoning."

Beason, also in her first match at Nebraska, had nine kills.

Allick had a strong all-around match with five kills on eight attempts, seven blocks and one ace.

In the first set, Nebraska got rolling during a stretch when Allick and Murray each had blocks.

Murray had the kill on set point with a blast to the middle of the court. She was also strong at the end of the second set with a block and a kill for NU's final two points.

Murray had a solid start, Cook said. She did get aces three times

over 21 serve-receive targets, and teams will continue to challenge her that way.

"She's going to get served balls, because when you're out there with Lexi and Laney they're going to serve (her)," Cook said.

Beason had more errors than Murray, but also wowed the crowd a few times with kills on back-row attacks.

"She's got it down," Reilly said. "She's hard to stop when we get that connection. We're going to keep working on that and keep trying to master that, and it will be hard to stop."

Outside hitter Shelby Caplonch had nine kills for Utah State. Nebraska had a .280 hitting percentage and limited the Aggies to .061.

Nebraska plays Lipscomb (0-1) at 5 p.m. Saturday. Lipscomb lost to SMU 25-17, 25-16, 25-21 earlier Friday in the first match of the Ameritas Players Challenge.

With three matches over three days to start the season, the Huskers will probably work in a few more players this weekend, including another freshman in middle blocker Andi Jackson.

"We just kind of told them that this is the group that was going to lead our stampede tonight," Cook said. "We're a herd of horses stampeding toward this season, and this was the group that was going to lead the stampede tonight. We'll mix it up a little (Saturday)."

Utah State (0-1) 20 17 17
At Nebraska (1-0) 25 25 25
USU (kills-aces-blocks): Caplonch 9-1-1, Mehmedovic 6-0-1, Schneeggenburger 5-0-2, Ray 4-0-2, Boyd 3-0-3, Wooden 2-0-3, Rodriguez 1-0-1, Hinchman 0-0-3. Totals: 30-5-12.

NU: Beason 9-0-2, Murray 9-1-5, Krause 6-2-0, Allick 5-1-7, Reilly 4-1-3, Mendelson 3-0-3. Totals: 35-4-20.

Digs: USU 28 (Holdaway 8, Caplonch 5, Wilton 10, 5, Mehmedovic 3, Schneeggenburger 2, Rodriguez 2, Wooden 1, Hone 1), NU 31 (Rodriguez 9, Reilly 7, Beason 5, Murray 4, Mendelson 3, Krause 2, Choboy 1). Set assists: USU 29 (Wilton-L